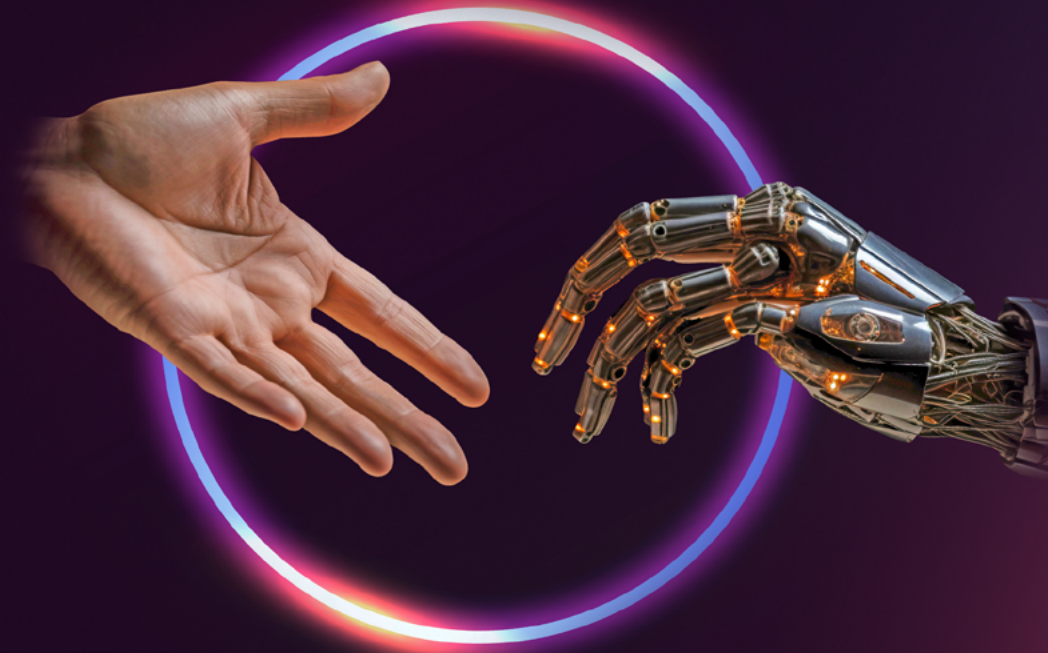


ECAS'S 10th ANNIVERSARY

DIGITAL DEMOCRACY DAY 2024

Something Old,
Something New,
Something Borrowed,
Something Blue!



Digital Democracy Day 2024, hosted by the European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), is set to mark a significant milestone, celebrating ten years of ECAS's work on Digital Democracy and its exploration of the transformative potential of emerging technologies. This event will spotlight two key panels, each diving into crucial aspects of digital democracy: insights from the past decade of e-participation practices for engaging citizens in decision-making and the future impact of cutting-edge technologies such as AI, Blockchain, and the Metaverse in reshaping democratic processes.

Speakers and participants will reflect on how to achieve the perfect marriage between democracy and technology by discussing what has been done until now (Something Old), what the future reserves (Something New), which lessons learnt should be taken on board (Something Borrowed) and how to tie everything together through citizen commitment to European values and active citizenship (Something Blue).

26 September
9:30 – 14:00 CET

BIP Brussels, Salle des Guichets,
Rue Royale, 2-4 1000 Brussels, Belgium

AGENDA

9.35

Welcome from **Assya Kavrakova**,
Executive Director, ECAS



9.50

Brando Benifei
S&D Group
Member of the European Parliament



10.00

THE FIRST PANEL

Digital Democracy Unleashed: What Did We Learn from a Decade of E-Participation?



*Moderated by:
Assya Kavrakova,
Executive Director,
ECAS*

The first panel will focus on the **Something Old** by offering a vibrant overview of ECAS's journey in digital democracy, which began in 2014. Over the past ten years, ECAS has conducted research projects on e-participation practices worldwide and championed initiatives that empower citizens through digital platforms. One recent example is CODE Europe, a European project that engaged citizens in a year-long crowdsourcing initiative to improve air quality in 10 cities and influence environmental policies at the EU level. ECAS, together with CSOs, universities, think tanks all across Europe, analysed how transnational crowdsourcing can effectively connect citizens and decision-makers, leading to impactful policy recommendations at the EU level. The panel will discuss lessons learnt from past and current challenges of e-participation – such as the digital divide, technical/security issues, communication efforts, etc., and define the successes of using technology in participatory democracy practices that can be passed on as *Something Borrowed*.



Fraser Henderson
Engagement
Expert, GoVocal/
Citizenlab, UK



Simon Delakorda
Executive
Director, Institute
for Electronic
Participation
(InePA), Slovenia



Robert Bjarnason
Founder and
Director, Citizens
Foundation,
Iceland (*online*)



Vesna Bajšanski-Agić
Vice President
of Strategic
Alliances and
Global Develop-
ment, TechSoup
and Philea

Q&A

Discussion with participants

11.15

Coffee Break

11.30

THE SECOND PANEL

The Next Frontier: Can AI, Blockchain, and the Metaverse Transform Democracy?



*Moderated by:
Elisa Ironi, Programme
Director-European
Democracy, ECAS*

The second panel will explore the **Something New – the advancements expected to transform democratic participation over the next decade**. Experts in technology and democracy will discuss the integration of Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain, and the Metaverse into governance structures. The capability for AI to enhance decision-making through data analysis will be a key focus, alongside the ethical implications and the need for transparent, unbiased AI systems. At the same time, blockchain technology has yet to unleash its potential for future democratic governance, with possibilities for more secure and transparent elections or more accountable decision-making with decentralised governance models. The Metaverse's immersive virtual environments could also present innovative ways for citizen engagement with virtual town halls, interactive consultations, and VR simulations for democratic participation. The speakers will also elaborate on the risks of these technologies and how we can prepare to make full use of them to enhance new European democratic practices in the future.



Dr Firat Cengiz
Senior Lecturer
in Law, University
of Liverpool



Julia Hoffmann
Managing
Consultant,
Citizens'
Participation,
Climate and
Energy,
ifok GmbH



Prof Dr Jamal Shahin
Professor and
Programme Director
of the Advanced
Master European
Integration and
Chair in Digital
Sovereignty, VUB



Alexandros Vigkos
Policy Officer-
Virtual
Worlds and Web
4.0,
European
Commission

Q&A

Discussion with participants

12.55

Concluding remarks

13.00

Lunch

For further information, please
contact elisa.ironi@ecas.org